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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - IRAQI ELECTIONS;FEBRUARY 2

Summary

[11](#). Kuwait TV coverage of Iraqi elections remained eclipsed somewhat due to ongoing reports about Kuwait's response to recent clashes between security forces and suspected terrorists. Commentators continue to praise the course of Iraqi democracy after "thirty years of fear." End summary.

Kuwaiti TV

[12](#). News Coverage: On February 1, Kuwaiti TV devoted a quarter hour of straight reporting to the "waiting" period for results of the Iraqi elections. The segment ran as a second lead story and followed ongoing reports about the Kuwait's response to recent clashes between Kuwaiti security forces and suspected terrorists.

[13](#). Speculation about Results: Speculative reports centered on the likely victory of Eyad Allawi and Abdulaziz Hakeem.... One reporter noted: "After the Iraqis proved their determination to the world, they can merely wait and only time will reveal the results."

[14](#). Yawer's speech: Ghazi Yawer's press conference was also aired; he stated: "The people making problems during the elections were not Iraqis. Ask any Iraqi and he will tell you that they are not Iraqis but people from outside who are trying to ruin this land. There will be no civil war here."

[15](#). Iraqi Political Analyst: An interview with political analyst Dr. Abdulrazaq Al-Na'as included his reply to a question about Yawer's speech: "It was just a message to those who boycotted the elections. It's also a plea to ensure that Iraqis are united and so there will be no civil war."

[16](#). From South of Iraq: Coverage filed from Basra: "...the Iraqi National Accord party seems to be second so far, and the streets of Basra are very quiet while all await the results."

Block Quotes

[17](#). Regular columnist Mohammed Musa'ed Al-Saleh wrote in independent Al-Qabas (2/2): "Despite terrorist threats, media the world over witnessed the admirable stand of the Iraqi people aired during the elections on January 30th. Interviews featured average Iraqis saying that, through democracy, Iraqi problems, one of which is the withdrawal of the foreign forces head by the Americans and the British, can be solved. The departure of foreign forces is now certain for they are not prepared to see their sons dying on foreign soil for any interest. Their presence is no longer important as they're being replaced by the economy given the presence of various foreign companies. And control over the country's capabilities derives from the economy."

[18](#). Liberal columnist Amer Al-Tameemi wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (2/2): "On Sunday, January 30, the women of Iraq, after casting votes during the first free elections since 50 years... rejoiced and ululated... American will and the determination of Iraq's political leadership enabled them to confront terrifying challenges. At the same time, the positive response of the Iraqi people and their perseverance in exercising their democratic rights by freeing themselves, after thirty-five years, from fear represents a significant turning point and is a great political accomplishment in itself... As for the Arab Gulf states, they want nothing more, while contributing to the process of economic development with all their financial and international resources, than to see political stability attained in Iraq. We sincerely hope the election results will provide a solid foundation to increase stability and development in all areas of the region."

[19](#). Liberal columnist Abdullah Bishara wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (2/2): "It is the duty of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to closely watch the Iraqi elections and the march towards democracy as it will impact future strategy for political

stability and security in the region. It is in the higher interests of the GCC Council to see a democratic Iraq representing ethnic diversity, transparency, and respect for human rights. The Iraqi elections represented well the different ideologies and ethnic backgrounds... We welcome a democratic Iraq and call for embracing mutual interests and common goals to achieve progress and prosperity for all."

LeBaron